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829 602 relations; for him they are all contained within a single frame of social reference, determined, at bottom, by his parentage. He cannot connect the rules and conditions that govern his own social behaviour with the general principles of Tale social structure. He has no means of ascertaining these, since the Tallensi do not make a systematic study of their own society. Every native knows only a limited sector of the social system, and the picture he has of it is built up out of his direct experience of the way in which it acts upon the day to day conduct of his life. Individuals who have the same or nearly the same field of social relations tend to have the same picture of their society; and individuals who have different fields of social relations tend to interpret their social behaviour and the structure of their society by the same concepts and along the same lines in so far as the same principles determine Tale social structure in every sector of the society. When we speak of Tale social philosophy or Tale thought, we do not mean that the natives have a systematic body of objective knowledge about their own society. We mean only the common denominators in the knowledge of their society that they have individually. Such knowledge, though partially inaccurate and transmitted only in face to face contact, is necessary for the existence of every society. For men employ their social notions in their relations with others and adapt their concepts to those of their fellows in carrying on collective life. Common notions emerge out of corporate and co-operative social action for common ends. In a society as homogeneous as that of the Tallensi this knowledge is widespread and tends to be uniform; hence the common denominators stand out.

829 602 ×618 When a native harks back to kinship in order to explain or interpret any social tie that directs his corporate or co-operative activities, he is putting forward a common point of view, but not an objectively accurate one. The outside student, seeing Tale social life on a wider scale than any native, can see differences in the significance of kinship for the individual, and of clanship for a corporate unit. Thus, matrilateral kinship has a different value for the individual from what it has in the sphere of clanship. In the former case, matrilateral kinship confers definite privileges and obligations on an individual in relation to other individuals or to defined groups, and it has the same value for everybody. In the latter case, it is one of several fictions used to rationalize ties of a particular kind between corporate units. For example, the sister's son (*ahɔŋ*) of a Ba'ari man is not entitled by right of matrilateral kinship to participate in sacrifices at Ba'at Da'a; but Ba'at-Lakum yidɛm exercise this right in virtue of clanship ties accounted for by the fiction of descent from a sororal nephew. Similarly, it is evident to the sociologist that the exogamic barrier by which ties of clanship are distinguished from other social ties has a different structural value from the prohibition against marrying a maternal kinsman; for the former is a factor of solidarity between corporate units, and the latter the index of a particular tie between certain individuals. But the natives lump them together.

● [601]

829 602 ×618 601 Thus it comes about that the Tallensi describe and discuss the social relations of corporate units in terms of kinship, using such concepts as *sunzɔ*, *mabii*, and *dɔyam*. The primary significance of these concepts will

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be discussed in our next volume. It will be useful, however, to sum up the meanings attached to them in the context of the structural relations between corporate units.

The term *sunzɔ* (pl. *sunzɔp*) means literally sibling by the same father. It is applied by the members of a particular lineage or clan to another lineage or clan with which they have a defined structural relationship, involving reciprocal rights, duties, and interests, identical with or analogous to those that obtain between segments of a single lineage. The natives visualize this relationship, which they describe by the abstract noun *sunzɔt*, as modelled on the social relationship of brothers.

Mabii (pl. *mabiis*), literally mother's child, and the abstract noun *mabiirɔt*, are more loosely used and have a wider range of reference. In its primary sense *mabii* denotes a kinsman of the same generation, in particular a sibling, as distinguished from kinsmen of a preceding or succeeding generation. Its emphasis, however, is not on the reciprocal rights, duties, and interests of siblings, but on their equality of status and on the sentiments of brotherhood based on common descent. A man can speak appropriately of his brother as his *mabii*, but not of his son. Lineages of the same order of segmentation can be described as *mabiis*, but not a segment of a lineage in relation to the whole lineage. Related clans, or even clans that have some distinctive usage in common, can speak of one another as *mabiis*. In certain circumstances all the Tallensi may be described as *mabiis* by contrast with non-Tallensi. *Mabiirɔt* means 'to be akin to one another in some way'—by kinship in the narrow sense, in a kinship context; by local propinquity, political or ritual association, common custom, or merely common race, in other contexts. It is reminiscent of our own phrase 'kith and kin', which we apply to our actual kinsmen in one context, and to our 'cousins', the Australians or Canadians, in another. We have tried to convey this by translating *mabiirɔt* by 'kinship in the wide sense'.

Lastly, there is the concept *dɔɣam*, derived from the verb *dɔɣ-*, to bear or beget a child. Its primary reference is to kinship by consanguinity; hence it is most appropriately used to refer to a structural tie based on a known or accepted genealogical connexion. It serves to distinguish such ties from apparently similar ties for which no genealogical connexion or at most a very general community of stock is postulated. Thus, a Tongo man will describe the people of Yaməlɛg as 'our *dɔɣam*', but not the people of Zoo; they are merely 'our *mabiis*'. *Dɔɣam* has no reference to the relative status of the parties or to their precise jural relationship. Father and son, uncle and nephew, a person and his distant cognate, clansfolk, members of linked lineages, are all *dɔɣam* to one another. The term refers to the tie of consanguinity itself.

All three terms are frequently used in a metaphorical way to express attitudes of amity, solidarity, or goodwill, such as are taken for granted amongst kinsfolk, even where the parties concerned have no social ties based on genealogical connexion. To give an instance, Soog and Zubiun were estranged from each other for a long time. At length they were compelled for ritual reasons to meet and become reconciled. Pledging their clans to everlasting amity and goodwill in the future, the two spokes-

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men declared fervently '*ti a dɔyam*—we are consanguineous kin'. Let no one betray this kinship in the future; and if a man of either clan does so, let the ancestors and the Earth visit punishment on him. *Dɔyam* was used here to express in the most emphatic way both the state that it was desirable to maintain between the two clans and the special cordiality they felt for one another on this signal occasion of a ceremonial reconciliation after a long breach in their good relations. Similarly, when Tallensi wished to express particular cordiality towards, and confidence in, me they used to say, with great self-satisfaction, '*Nyɛn pana ɛŋ ti dɔyam*—you have now become our kinsman'.

The concept *dɔyam* is the link between the individual's notion of ritual collaboration as a function of kinship and the common idea that ritual collaboration between corporate units is a sign of a corresponding genealogical connexion. For consanguineous kinship[1] is the fundamental condition that permits individuals to join together in a common ritual activity, and the individual's scheme of ritual values is linked to his social frame of reference through the medium of his kinship ties. It is in his relations with his consanguineous kinsfolk that a person has the most direct experience of that amity and solidarity which are assumed to be intrinsic to all ties of ritual collaboration.

The Network of Structural Ties among the Gɔrisi and in the Sie District

The intricate network of structural ties and cleavages that links the Talis clans and lineages among themselves stretches across into the country of the Gɔrisi. There, at Bɔlɔga, at Zuarungu, and elsewhere, we find similar aggregations of local clans and lineages, differentiated from one another and interlinked in a similar pattern to that which we discovered among the Talis; but from the superficial inquiries I was able to make, it seemed that the organization is much less elaborate among the Gɔrisi than among the Talis. These clusters of Gɔre clans and lineages adjacent to the Tallensi are hooked on to the Tale cluster by intercalary lineages such as the Biuk Namoos and Sanaab biis at Bɔlɔga. Thus, Sanaab biis are connected with Ba'ari (cf. p. 88) both by spatial proximity and by ties of clanship, but they lie outside the social horizon of an average member of any of the Hill Talis clans.

The same pattern of interlinked structural ties is found also among the non-Namoo clans and lineages of the Sie district, but again it is not so elaborate and complete a system as that of the Talis. In this district we find the same type of composite clan bearing a local name, considering itself a unit, expressing its corporate identity and solidarity in its relationship to *bɔyar* and *tɛŋ*, and composed of relatively autonomous maximal lineages each with its own lineage head holding a particular ritual office. Again we find contiguous maximal lineages linked with one another by ties of clanship and of clanship-by-courtesy.

But in this area the chains of linkage are more variable than among the Talis. Political and territorial ties often unite neighbouring groups which

[1] As opposed to affinal kinship (*deen*) which is the prototypical social relationship that excludes sacrificing together.

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CHAPTER II

KINSHIP AND THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

The Connexion between Kinship and the Lineage System

128 THE method of analysis we have followed in this study has required, for purposes of description, the isolation of the lineage system from the domestic organization of the Tallensi. In the actual life of the natives, however, these two planes of social structure do not emerge in isolation from each other. Like blood and tissue in the animal organism, they constitute interpenetrating media of Tale social life. Membership of a family and membership of a lineage are equally and often concurrently decisive for the conduct of the individual and for the course of his life. Yet the analytical separation of these two planes of social structure is not entirely artificial. It corresponds to the fact that the interests and ends (primarily political, jural, and ritual) subserved by the lineage system differ significantly from those (primarily economic and reproductive) subserved by the family system, both in their bearing on individual conduct and in the values attached to them by the society.

613 The lineage system is the structural basis of Tale political, jural, and ritual institutions, whereas the domestic organization is the structural basis of person-to-person relations in the sphere of kinship in the narrow sense. One of our main tasks in the present investigation will be to observe how these two categories of interests and ends, and the institutions and practices in which they emerge, are co-ordinated and integrated. For the individual's rights and duties, sentiments and values, manners and moral conduct, his thinking, feeling, and acting, in the context of lineage relationships, on the one hand, and in the context of family relationships on the other, are organically integrated, as are lineage and family in the social structure. This appears most clearly, we shall see, from the way in which segmentation in the domestic family parallels segmentation in the lineage, the two processes being not only simultaneous in time but complementary in function. Fission in the lineage[1] follows the pattern of cellular segmentation in the joint family; and fission in the joint family, as we shall see, follows the lines of cleavage in the effective minimal lineage. The local and the functional groupings of families are regulated by the agnatic distance of the family heads from one another. In the study of Tale kinship usages and values we are confronted, at every step, by the interaction of domestic organization and lineage structure.

602 The Tallensi apply the concepts of kinship to describe and define domestic relations and the person-to-person ties that are derived from them. They use the same concepts in dealing with lineage relations. In

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

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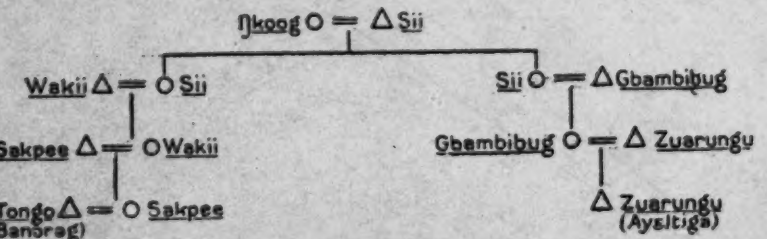
of *soog* kinship to the Tallensi. Each of them has found a new friend who will be to him as a brother. If he has business in his *soog*'s clan he will be able to go there with an easy mind; for he will be assured of an hospitable welcome in his *soog*'s house and of his *soog*'s assistance in his suit. Moreover, through this *soog* he will be introduced to other distant *saarət* unknown to him but known to his *soog*.

Saarət discover one another in other ways too. One evening I met Banərəg's wife coming from my boys' quarters. She told me that she had taken some food to one of the boys, Ayɛltiga, a native of Zuarungu, who, she had just learnt, was her *soog*. She had been to see her maternal grandmother's sister's son, at Gbambibug (she herself is a Sakpee woman), and he had told her that Ayɛltiga was their common *soog*. So she had hastened home to call on her newly found *soog* and had cooked a meal for him to show him the hospitality due from a *soog*. She told me this with many expressions of pleasure.

The following genealogy shows the connexion between Banərəg's wife and Ayɛltiga. It is typical of the genealogical range within which uterine kinship is usually effective.



(Clan name of each person beside the sex symbol; personal names in parenthesis)

As this genealogy shows, the uterine line can be thought of as 'travelling' from clan to clan with the generations; and that is how the natives visualize it. 'Our mother' (the progenitrix of the line), said Banərəg's wife 'went forth from Dkoog (*yi ŋkoog na*) and married into Sii; and then his (Ayɛltiga's) grandmother (*ma kpeem*) married Gbambibug and my grandmother married Wakii; and then his mother (*ma*) married Zuarungu and my mother married Sakpee.' The *soog* line is visualized as a continuous entity. *Saarət* often refer to each other by kinship terms, but in a very loose way. A person is inclined to speak of a *soog* as, for instance, 'my elder sibling', simply because he or she is senior in age, though possibly junior in generation. More commonly a *soog* is simply 'my *soog*'; and if it is a woman, she tends to be identified with the uterine line as a whole and is described as 'mother (*ma*)', irrespective of her generation status, especially if she is older than the speaker. A relationship similar to that of parent and child often exists between *saarət* who differ considerably in age.

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606 and his adult brothers. The only relaxation of this attitude occurs with
607 her sisters-in-law (*pɔɣakie*, pl. *pɔɣakies*). With them, often her equals in years and her companions in work, she can laugh and play and joke. Like herself, they are already, or are fated to be, married out of their natal families to 'strangers'. This is a bond of fellowship superadded to that of sex and often age. But they also belong to the opposite camp. Identifying themselves with their brothers and their lineage, they sometimes speak of her as 'our wife (*ti pɔɣa*)', and she sometimes refers to them as 'my husbands (*n-scrib*)'. They will take the side of their brother if she comes into conflict with her husband or deserts him. Her relationship with them is typical of the ambivalence that underlies the joking relationship among the Tallensi.

•601 In the first year or so of marriage a woman tries to avoid having to
576 address her male in-laws and her husband directly in public. If they address her it will be in a somewhat formal and courteous way, her husband and his brothers using her clan name, her father-in-law addressing her as 'mother (*ma*)'. She is most at home—but in a very deferential manner—with her mother-in-law, in whose rooms and under whose care she lives, whose domestic duties she largely takes over, and who also addresses her as 'mother (*ma*)'. To any member of the family she speaks of her father-in-law as 'father (*ba*)' and of her mother-in-law as 'mother (*ma*)', and she addresses the latter by this term. Outside the family a woman speaks of her husband as 'my husband (*n-sɛt*)'; of his brothers as 'my older' or 'my younger husband (*n-sɛt-bier*, or *n-sɛt-pit*)'; and of his parents as 'my father (mother)-in-law (*n-daŋaamdoog*, masc.—*n daŋaampɔk*, fem.)'. Her husband speaks of her as 'my wife (*mpɔɣa*)'; his brothers as 'my older or younger brother's wife (*m-bier* or *m-pit pɔɣa*)', or in some situations as 'our (i.e. the lineage's) wife'; her parents-in-law as *sampɔɣa*.

606 The status of a woman in her conjugal family is most sharply focused in her relations with her parents-in-law. For it is they who form the axis around which the family revolves. Its unity, its independence, the management of its material affairs, and the maintenance of its well-being all reside in them. Though the general impression one receives of a woman's relationship with her parents-in-law is one of affability and ease, it is potentially anomalous, particularly in the early years. As their son's wife she is in the position of a daughter to them. She will give valuable and indispensable service in the economy of the household. She will produce children to augment the family and the lineage. But, as she herself knows and feels, she is an intruder. She is made to feel this in the early years of marriage even if, as so often happens, she belongs to an adjacent clan, and was personally well known to her conjugal family before marriage. For marriage creates entirely new associations between individuals and families. If she was married by elopement she knows that she is on trial, perhaps the object of a

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606 578 ter-in-law towards one another, and the terminology of address associated with them, put a protective fence between parents-in-law and daughter-in-law. 'My mother', or 'my father', in this context means 'a person to whom I owe punctilious respect'. The relation is one of reciprocal respect, because it is based on something in the nature of a contract. The daughter-in-law's attitude is an exaggeration of one aspect of filial respect towards the parents. This aspect is more prominent in kinship relations outside the focal field and in ceremonial relations patterned on, but structurally different from, true parent-child relations, than in the latter. It is reminiscent of the behaviour of his clansmen to a chief or tendaana on formal occasions, when his symbolic position as father (*ba*) of the clan is most apparent.

Naturally the barrier between father-in-law and daughter-in-law is stricter than between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law owing to the difference of sex, though it is not obvious to an outsider. Once she is accepted, a man usually treats his daughter-in-law with kindness and affability. In public he treats her with a familiar friendliness, in the same way as if she were his daughter. But whereas he scolds his daughter without hesitation, he does not scold or criticize his daughter-in-law directly. It would offend and hurt her, and upset their amicable relations. The barrier between them—and this applies in a lesser degree to the mother-in-law too—can be maintained only on the basis of mutual courtesy and affability. Where the barrier is most sharply emphasized is not in their public intercourse but in their relations as members of opposite sexes. For a man to have sexual relations with, or even sit on the same mat as, his daughter-in-law is a sin of the first magnitude. '*Dɛn n-kih pam!* (that is an extreme taboo)', say the natives, with every sign of repugnance. It is a sin that can never be wholly atoned for. Sooner or later the culprits will be slain by the ancestor spirits; for, like incest with a father's wife of which it is the counterpart, it destroys irreparably the moral and religious bonds of father and son. I heard of an old man who died some years ago who used to have his daughters-in-law sit on his lap, and 'play' with them. This, my informants said scoffingly, was just the ill manners of an old dotard. But Gunyaam's seduction of his daughter-in-law was revealed to me with bated breath. It was no wonder, my informant said, that he died soon after, and that misfortunes crowded on his family.

[835]

The relations of daughter-in-law to parents-in-law are well summed up in the statement always made by Tallensi if they are asked for an explanation of the terminology of address used between these relatives. They say: 'We stand in awe of them (parents-in-law or daughters-in-law)', (*ti zootbame*, lit. 'we fear them').[1]

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[1] This terminology of address is of considerable theoretical interest. Rattray (op. cit., p. 6) attributes the custom of addressing a daughter-in-law as 'mother' (customary also amongst the Gorisi, Namnam, and other peoples adjacent to

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The Relationship of Husband and Wife

The closest bonds a woman has with any member of the family into which she marries are her bonds with her husband. Habit, economic co-operation, and the jural authority of husband over wife bring them closer and closer together as the years pass. But these mutual interests are insufficient by themselves. The true cement of their union is the birth of children. Children give the union its *raison d'être*. They become the focus of the common interests, common pride, and common devotion of the partners, without which their economic co-operation or the other satisfactions they get from marriage would be meaningless. As we have already seen, one thing Tallensi never tire of stressing is that the object of marriage is to have children. When she has borne two or three living children to him a woman will be most unwilling to leave her husband, however hard her life with him may be.

The arrival of children not only forges closer the emotional bonds of husband and wife, but it also unites them socially in a firmer compact.

the Tallensi) to the 'horror of a father having intercourse with a son's wife'. He does not take into account the fact that mother-in-law and daughter-in-law also address each other reciprocally as 'mother'. As is mentioned above, the Tallensi themselves have no complete explanation for this usage, and this applies to the neighbouring 'tribes'. Many informants amplified the conventional formula 'We fear them' by pointing out that it was a degree of respect similar to that due to a mother. As we shall see later, the respect due to one's mother is almost a sacrosanct norm. The natives do not explicitly associate the mode of address with the horror of incest between father-in-law and daughter-in-law, but they do stress the latter in discussing the relationship of father-in-law and daughter-in-law. We shall see later that incest with a daughter-in-law is coupled with incest with one's mother as among the most serious kinship sins conceivable to the Tallensi. Rattray's inference, therefore, probably isolates one element in the usage, but it is a suppressed element. The incest barrier is a factor of importance in the relations of father-in-law and daughter-in-law in very many patrilineal African societies. Logically, however, it would seem to be more in keeping with the relationship of parent-in-law and daughter-in-law for the former to address the latter as his or her daughter, as is customary in a number of African societies. Here, however, a combination of circumstances arising out of the lineage principle comes into the picture. A daughter-in-law is not under her parents-in-law's authority and control in the same sense as their daughter is. She is not a substitute daughter, but their son's wife and a potential mother of their grandchildren of the same lineage. She is a stranger in theory, standing outside the scheme of lineage loyalties and sanctions, yet at the same time the one person on whom the whole future of the lineage depends. Again no Tallensi ever suggested that a daughter-in-law is called 'mother' by her parents-in-law because she is a future mother of lineage members. It is rather her ambiguous position as a stranger tied to the lineage that is uppermost in their thought. Her being addressed as 'mother' by her parents-in-law may be a means of stressing this and of over-emphasizing the respect due to her from them, the usage being a metaphoric derivation from the mode of address used to one's mother and, by extension, in an honorific sense to old women in general. In short, this usage aptly symbolizes the tensions in the relations of parents-in-law and daughter-in-law, in respect to which the latter is almost on an equal footing with the former.

60/● [835]

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readily consents to another daughter's marrying into the same joint family; and this cordiality is easily extended to more distant clansmen on both sides. A Tenzugu man who has a son-in-law at Zubiuŋ with whom his relations are cordial will be pleased to see another daughter marry this son-in-law or one of his close agnates; and if the son-in-law himself or a member of his medial lineage comes to seek the hand of a daughter of the father-in-law's medial lineage, the men of that lineage would be favourably disposed to the suitor.

Another factor favouring successive marriages with women of the same lineage or clan is the preference of the natives for wives from a nearby rather than a distant clan. A man looking for an additional wife tends to turn his eyes first to the same neighbouring settlements in which he formerly sought a wife, and men of the same lineage tend to seek wives in the same settlements, as we shall find.

When co-wives refer to one another as 'sisters' they are using a kinship term in a metaphorical sense to indicate their social equivalence—that is, their identity of role and status in their conjugal home and settlement. But if they are kin they speak of one another as 'sisters' in a deeper sense. They have a bond of mutual attachment that holds independently of their relations as wives of the same man or the same lineage. As 'sisters' in the kinship sense they help each other more regularly and more altruistically; they share such things as foodstuffs and firewood more readily; they mother each other's children with more devotion and with a greater feeling of common interest in them; they live together more harmoniously, in general, than unrelated co-wives. This is especially true of a woman and a co-wife whom she has 'fetched in' as the term *poɣasoog*, literally a *soog* sister wife (that is, a wife who is like a *soog* sister to another wife), suggests. The older woman watches over the younger almost as if she were a younger full sister or her own daughter.

Tallensi take it for granted that co-wives are apt to quarrel. 'Oh yes', both men and women say with a laugh, if they are asked about it, 'co-wives quarrel—but nevertheless they stay on.' The point is that quarrels between co-wives are taken as a matter of course and do not lead to a wife's desertion. These quarrels may be nothing more than the flaring up of frayed tempers; for among the Tallensi, as among ourselves, people who live so intimately together as the members of a family are prone to fall out over trifles. Or they may be real fights, beginning with taunts and insults and ending with blows. Neighbours, usually men of the husband's lineage, hearing the uproar, may rush in to separate the women, if the husband himself or other men of his family are not on the spot to do so. For there is no one among the women of a household with authority to discipline the others. The senior mistress of the home, whether she is the mother or the senior wife of the owner of the house, ranks above the rest of the women, but has no disciplinary authority over them.

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602 613 segment. Clansmen beyond these limits are no longer concerned with the rearing of a child. They are not directly involved in either the economic or the educational or the ritual responsibility for its passage through life. Hence they all fall into the broad category of clan kin (*yidɛm*) or clan brethren (*mabiis*) irrespective of age or generation, though individuals among them might be addressed by specific kinship terms, in certain situations, as an honorific gesture. Tallensi feel that [736 768] a mother's brother (*ahɔb*) is a nearer kinsman than a contemporary of one's father of another inner lineage of the same clan; and while it is not uncommon for an orphan to go and live with his *ahɔb*, it is very rare for an orphan to join the household of a clansman of a different inner lineage.

602 613 593 Tale jural and ritual institutions show, and intelligent informants perceive quite clearly, that the emotional elements in the relationship of parent and child are distinct from the jural and moral elements. There are both pragmatic and ritual sanctions for the latter but not for the former. Indeed the emotional elements sometimes serve as a sanction or as a rationalization of conduct in the relations of parents and children. With natural parents the emotional elements and the jural and moral elements of the relationship are completely interfused. With proxy parents the former yield precedence to the latter, and it is often easier to study the jural and moral elements of the relationship with proxy parents than with own parents. The widest range within which the relationship of successive generations is recognized is principally distinguished by ritual and ceremonial customs. We thus get a series [601] beginning with people who will describe each other, if questioned, as 'my own father (mother) (*m-mɛŋ ba* (*ma*))' and 'my own child (*m-mɛŋ bii*)', or by some equivalent phrase; stretching to those who refer to each other as *ba-pit* or *ma-pit*, younger father or mother (or if it is a father's older brother or mother's older co-wife, *ba-bier* and *ma-bier*), and *bier*[1] *bii*—child of older sibling of the same sex (or *pit bii*—child of younger sibling of the same sex); and ending with people who say of their classificatory parent or child 'I only call him father (mother, child) (*mbuon u la mba* (*ma, bii*))'. There is always a physical difference of generation between own parents and children, generally such a difference between close proxy parents and their siblings' or co-wives' children, but quite often little or no difference of age between classificatory parent and child at the limit of the range. It is quite a common thing to meet

[1] *Bier* is the common term for senior by age or generation; but it is a curious point that the usage quoted above is not exclusive. Tallensi also describe a father's older brother as *ba-kpeem* (elder father), and a mother's older co-wife as *ma-kpeem*. But this form is more commonly used to refer to a grandparent. The context makes it clear whether the reference is to a proxy parent or a grandparent. The use of *kpeem* instead of *bier* may be a borrowing from the Gonja and Namnam, whose dialects are closer to Mole than to Dagbane and who have the dialect variants *kɛma* and *yɛbɔga* for senior and junior.

Terms: Ba = *Father*
Ma = *Mother*
Yaab = *Grandparent & Ancestor*
Ba-Kpeem = *Grandfather*
Ma-Kpeem = *Grandmother*

Kpeem = *senior*
bier = *older like sex sibling*
pit = *younger like sex sibling*
tau = *opposite sex sibling*
pɔk = *female*
? = *Acknowledged in certain situations only*

FIG. 4. The range of parenthood.

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considering this situation more closely as it will give us a further insight into the working of the classificatory principle.

The simplest and clearest index to it is in certain observances at the funeral of any man of one's father's generation. A man whose 'father' is alive may not perform the principal rites such as the killing of the goat or sheep from which the loin-cover for the corpse will be cut, or the rites of 'entering the *zɔŋ*'; and he may not eat the ceremonial food associated with or consumed in these rites. To infringe these taboos is not only an insult to one's 'father' but a sin, since it is equivalent to wishing him dead. There are men whose proxy or classificatory fathers are alive who know more about ritual matters than their seniors. I have seen such men stand by and direct others in the performance of funeral rites which they themselves are forbidden to carry out. I have seen them raging with exasperation at the incompetence of the old men or women who were carrying out the rites; but they would have been shocked at the suggestion that it would save temper and trouble if they performed the rites themselves.

Again, the application of the notion varies relatively to the dimensions of the lineage involved in a particular situation and the whole constellation of classificatory kinship recognized within it. At one extreme stand matters that concern only the members of the nuclear lineage. That would be the case, for example, if the nuclear lineage assembled to make a sacrifice to its immediate founding ancestor. Thus, to take a lineage we have met in an earlier chapter, if Katiŋoo biis meet to sacrifice to Katiŋoo, only his grandsons and great-grandsons are concerned (see genealogy on p. 68). In such a situation the two patri-segments of Katiŋoo biis (Duun biis and Baa biis) are each formally recognized as a separate unit and the sacrificial meat is divided equally between them. If Ɔmara were dead, the share due to his patri-segment would fall to his sons; and they would, in this context, say that they have no father. They are, in fact, through the eldest son, taking the place of their father in intra-lineage relations; their status is no longer submerged in that of their father. They are thinking in terms of the contraposition of the two component patri-segments of the lineage. Within the limits of the nuclear lineage, the term 'father' (*ba*) means own father and a man whose own father is dead has no father. He speaks of his proxy-fathers (father's brothers and cousins) as his *ba-pirib*, junior fathers, or *ba-biernam*, senior fathers.

The higher the segmentary order of the lineage involved, the wider is the application of this notion. If the situation involves the inner lineage, then the nuclear lineage emerges as the smallest corporate unit recognized. This happens in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the inner lineage or in certain funeral customs where food contributions are made by the head of the nuclear lineage on behalf of the whole unit. In this case a man whose own father is dead but whose father's brother

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613 the chiefs appointed since the coming of the white man. Unlike their
622 predecessors they were mostly young men when they were appointed,
554 some of them still having their natural fathers alive. But 'a chief', the Tallensi say, 'is the father of his clan. No one can claim fatherhood over a chief' (*sɔ pu dɔŋa na'ab la*—literally, no one has begotten a chief). Whatever their individual shortcomings, Tale chiefs have one thing in common, and that is a strong sense of responsibility for the welfare of their own clans.

778 As usual, this conception has a religious precipitate. It emerges in
554 the status of a man's *Yin* shrine.[1] A man's *Yin* shrine is not fully established until it is ritually 'built' (*me*). Before that it is only a temporary and incomplete entity—even though it has been receiving sacrifices for perhaps twenty years. And usually it is not until a man belongs to the generation of fathers in his inner or medial lineage—that is, attains the status of being 'fatherless' in most social and ritual situations—that he 'builds' his *Yin*. Thus it often happens that a man dies before his *Yin* is built and his son has to carry out this rite. This applies also to the last stage in the development of a man's *Yin*, its removal to the *zanɔme*, the open space before the gateway. His father's *Yin* shrine is taken indoors and his is put in its place. This is a sign that he has reached the climax of his life. He is not only fatherless, but is perhaps
[888] the last of the oldest generation of the inner lineage. He has 'built a house (*me yiri*)', that is, has sons and grandsons to carry on the line and can spend what is left to him of his old age in honoured ease.

●601 It must not be thought from the foregoing that Tallensi never extend
613 the term 'father' outside the inner lineage. They speak of all men in the clan or the maximal lineage who belong to the oldest age groups as 'fathers'—and by analogy address any old woman married into the clan as 'mother' and any older clansman as 'older brother'. But these are all courtesy titles. A man will always treat an old man of a different inner lineage to whom he gives the courtesy title of 'father' with respect; but he does not owe him any filial duties or come under his authority directly.

613 To round off this picture, let us return again to Ziŋgan biis for a
554 moment and consider the case of Da'amo'o (aged about 35). He is Kutɔbis's late older full brother's (*bier-soog*) son. He occupies the same homestead as Kutɔbis, but has his own gateway and is economically independent of Kutɔbis. Kutɔbis is his proxy father. In no circumstances can Da'amo'o claim to be 'fatherless'. He is not fond of Kutɔbis; but he cannot escape from his jural and ritual authority. Kutɔbis succeeded to his late brother's social role in full; hence Da'amo'o is his 'child' in all ritual and jural respects. This comes out in Da'amo'o's attitude to life. When a man in this position is asked about affairs that concern the clan, or even his inner lineage as a whole, he will often reply 'I am a child, I do not know. You must ask my older brothers and my

[1] Cf. p. 227 below.

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fathers.' Practically the only sphere in which Da'amo'o can act without first obtaining Kutɔbis's assent is in economic matters that concern his own household alone. He cannot even sacrifice to his own father's spirit without first telling Kutɔbis, though responsibility for making the sacrifice is his and his only.

Da'amo'o's and Ɔndieso's wives had babies about the same time. Ɔndieso went off by himself to consult a diviner in order to find out which of his ancestors was to be the child's spirit guardian; Da'amo'o went with Kutɔbis, who consulted for him. In 1936 Da'amo'o collected a part of his sister's bride-price, consisting of a bull and £2. 10s. He showed it to Kutɔbis, who is the formal 'owner' of income of this sort, and with the latter's permission sent the bull off to his own father-in-law in part payment of his wife's bride-price. He put away the money. But about this time a rash action of Kutɔbis's eldest son brought a long-standing dispute between Ziŋgan biis and another inner lineage of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri to a head. In order to settle it, Kutɔbis, acting on behalf of the inner lineage, had to pay 30s. to the head of the other inner lineage. And as the original dispute and its recrudescence were both occasioned by members of Kutɔbis's nuclear lineage (Pa'ana biis) he had to 'find the money'. He obtained the money from Da'amo'o. Complaining about this to me, Da'amo'o said: 'It is not a debt—Kutɔbis is my father. I cannot ever demand my money from him. But one day my father-in-law will come for another cow for his daughter's bride-price. Then I will go to Kutɔbis and if he has a cow and wants to behave decently he will give it to my father-in-law.' Had Kutɔbis borrowed the money from Ɔndieso it would not have been a claimable debt either; but Ɔndieso would not have given him the money without a definite promise to repay it and without some indication of how Kutɔbis expected to be able to find the money to repay him. These differences between Ɔndieso's relationship with Kutɔbis and Da'amo'o's will be symbolically expressed in their different duties at Kutɔbis's funeral. Ɔndieso will undergo none of the rites of mourning and purification that orphans are subjected to, Da'amo'o is bound to go through all of them.

Our discussion of what it means to a Talɔŋ to have a father alive or not arose from a consideration of the formula 'Kinship does not cross the (inner) lineage'. For the sake of simplicity we have here spoken of lineages as if they were fixed units of structure instead of slowly changing configurations of social relations. In actuality the slowly changing equilibrium of intra-lineage and inter-lineage relations makes itself felt all the time. What is to-day a relatively clearly defined inner lineage will, in ten years' time, perhaps, be in process of splitting up into two inner lineages. Already there are signs of it in the relations of the two segments of Ziŋgan biis and in another generation it may well be that classificatory kinship will cease to be acknowledged between them.

This margin of elasticity in the range of classificatory kinship within

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the lineage often leads to conflict and it is in these conflicts that the process of fission is often completed. They arise chiefly in connexion with the inheritance of widows and the succession to the lineage *bɔɣar* (that is, to the headship of the lineage)—the two situations in which consistency between the corporate unity of the inner lineage and the recognition of generation differences is most severely tested. What happens is that the heads of what were previously regarded as the component segments of an inner lineage advance contradictory claims to the custody of the lineage *bɔɣar*. One may claim it on the grounds of seniority of generation—being the classificatory father of the other—while his opponent refuses to admit this and claims seniority by age. It is a conflict between 'seniority of begetting (*dɔɣam kpɛmɔt*)' (i.e. by generation) and 'seniority of predestiny' or, as we might say, chance (*Naa-Yin kpɛmɔt*) (i.e. by age). The long-drawn-out quarrel between Yinyɛla and the other elders of Tɔŋ-Puhug turned on a point of this kind. Yinyɛla claimed to be a generation superior to the heads of all the other segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri,[1] but the other elders would not admit the validity of this claim. The genealogical evidence supported Yinyɛla, and the precedents he quoted from the days of his father and grandfather were probably accurate. But that was not the question; the relations of the segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri had changed in the last two generations and, as the elders put it, 'begetting has died out (*dɔɣam kpiya*)'.

An earlier stage in the fading out of classificatory kinship appeared in the controversy over Baroog's widows. Nindɔɣat's eldest son was discovered to be secretly courting one of the women and Baroog's father immediately raised an outcry. Nindɔɣat, he protested, was his 'son' and Baroog's 'brother', hence Nindɔɣat's son would be committing incest if he married Baroog's widow, his classificatory mother. But Nindɔɣat stood by his son, arguing that they were no longer members of a single inner lineage but of two separate inner lineages. 'We are each our own *dug* (*ti a ti dug ti dug*),' he said. The weight of public opinion in the clan was against him, however, and the woman in the case took fright. But a split in the lineage is inevitable, though it may take a generation to complete.

Change of Status Due to Death of 'Father' Shown in Property Relations

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There is more to be said about the social consequences of having or not having a father alive, and we shall revert to the subject later from another point of view. What is so far clear is that a man's social status, particularly in jural and ritual matters, but also in economic affairs, advances step by step with the dying off of his fathers. Strictly speaking, he is not altogether autonomous until he has no more fathers within the range of the inner lineage, but in practice he is free of effective

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 196.

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613 428 Kutəbis also inherited the lineage *bəɣar* of Pa'anbəbis biis, of which nuclear lineage he and his sons and brother's sons form a segment. Again, this might have gone to the head of the other segment of Pa'anbəbis biis if he had been senior by generation or age to Kutəbis. With this *bəɣar* goes some land at the now abandoned site of Pa'anbəbis's homestead. If on Kutəbis's death the present head of Baɣanlərəg biis, Na'abzə, is still alive it will come to him.

Kutəbis also inherited the ancestral shrines of his immediate forebears Baɣana, Pa'ana, and Səmnam. With these shrines go several strips of land, especially the large home farm (*saman*) adjoining the homestead, which are the patrimonial property of Səmnam's line of descent. On Kutəbis's death they will be inherited by his younger 'brother' Pa'anbəbis II. Lastly, Kutəbis inherited some land which had been allocated to his father Baɣana as a private plot and thereafter became the patrimonial property of Baɣana's descendants.

He also assumed paternal rights over Yidaan's children. As Yidaan's sons farm independently of him, he cannot command their labour, though they are bound to assist him if he is hard-pressed and asks them to do so. In theory Kutəbis has the unrestricted right to dispose of his late brother's daughters in marriage, and to use the bride-price paid for any of them as he pleases. Actually, he would not marry off any of the girls without consulting Yidaan's oldest son, Da'amo'o, and would, as we have seen, hand over the bride-price to Da'amo'o. He retains the right, however, to draw on the bride-price of any of Yidaan's daughters in a difficulty calling for payments he cannot meet. We have quoted an instance of this on p. 155. Kutəbis also nominally inherited what was left of the livestock and clothes Yidaan had amassed,[1] but handed them over to Da'amo'o, retaining only the right to use them in an emergency. As regards Yidaan's widows, the older woman chose to stay on with Da'amo'o, as she was past the age of child-bearing. The younger accepted Kutəbis as she had a child at the breast. But it was confidently said, by members of the lineage, that she would probably leave him when her child was old enough for her to have another.

Parallel Significance of 'Not having a Mother alive'

613 593 784 601 On the principle that both parents have an equally indispensable part in the procreation and upbringing of children, whether or not one has a mother alive is also socially recognized. There is a general taboo binding on everybody who has a mother alive. They may not drink water out of an earthenware dish (*laa*); they must always use a calabash (*ŋman*), the normal drinking vessel. This is connected with the ritual use of earthenware dishes as food and drinking-vessels in the purification of

[1] This was because Kutəbis and Yidaan were *saarət*, full brothers. As we shall see later, full brothers have a very great degree of social equivalence and are entitled to inherit one another's personal effects in a way that half-brothers are not.

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orphans at funerals. The ritual prohibitions falling on 'those who have a father alive', at funerals of old men, also fall on 'those who have a mother alive', at funerals of old women. But owing to the lesser importance of maternal than of agnatic descent in determining social status, whether or not one has a mother alive is of less social importance than whether one has or lacks a 'father'. The range within which classificatory 'mothers' are socially recognized is the same as for 'fathers', since 'mothers' derive their status from their husbands. But it is only the wives of 'fathers' belonging to one's own nuclear lineage who receive the deference due to a 'mother'. Beyond that range it is a voluntary matter whether or not one treats a 'father's' wife with the respect due to a 'mother'. Putting this in another way, a proxy mother is usually one's own mother's co-wife within the limits of, at most, the expanded family, who might or actually did take one's mother's place in bringing one up. It is this which distinguishes a 'mother' who is a 'father's wife' from one's natural mother's uterine sisters and kinswomen, who are also called 'mothers'. In one matter only is the recognition as classificatory 'mothers' of the wives of all 'fathers' of the inner lineage strictly enforced, and that is in regard to incest. This is of special importance when it comes to the inheritance of widows.

To take an example again from Zingan biis, Da'amo'o and Ondieso both call Kutɔbis's wives their 'mothers'. They would not be able to marry any of them if Kutɔbis were to die. But if one of the wives dies, Da'amo'o, having lost his own mother, is obliged to go through the rites of mourning as for a mother. Ondieso will not. He may have his head shaven as a sign of mourning for her if she was particularly friendly with his family, or was particularly helpful to him, say by taking care of his wife during a difficult confinement. But this would be a voluntary gesture of respect, not a ritual obligation. If they are both present at a funeral of an old woman who is not married into their inner lineage, Da'amo'o will refrain, out of respect for his proxy mothers, from taking part in the rites forbidden to 'those who have mothers alive'. Ondieso will not, unless he wants to make a special gesture of respect to Kutɔbis or his wives. The personal relationships of the people concerned are irrelevant within the nuclear lineage. Da'amo'o, in fact, heartily dislikes Kutɔbis's senior wife and has a strong affection for Ondieso's proxy mother and his (Da'amo'o's) classificatory mother, Yinduuŋ, who is living with Ondieso. But he cannot escape the mourning rites he must undergo if the former dies, and is not obliged to undergo these rites if the latter dies.

The difference in the conventional attitudes towards a proxy mother and a proxy father is also shown in the way Tallensi look at the duty of supporting an aged parent, a subject we shall consider further in Chapter VII.

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CHAPTER IX

GRANDPARENTS AND GRANDCHILDREN

603 596 WE have mentioned earlier that the relations of grandparents and grandchildren can be regarded as a foil to those of parents and children. Tallensi themselves often draw the contrast. It is particularly striking with the paternal grandparents. For in a three-generation joint family the head is a grandfather and the senior *dugdaana* a grandmother. As head of the family the grandfather holds jural, economic, and ritual authority over all its members, including those whom he calls grandchildren, and there is a contrast between his authority and his familiarity in personal relations with his grandchildren. It reflects the contrast between the cleavage due to difference of status and role in terms of the lineage principle and the ties of cognatic kinship between grandchildren and paternal grandparents. This contrast does not occur with the maternal grandparents, in whose relations with a daughter's child the question of authority does not arise. When Tallensi say that a person can die happily if he or she has 'reached grandchildren (*paa yaas*)' they refer primarily to paternal grandparent and grandchild.

603 601 A grandchild of either sex refers to a grandfather of either line as *ba-kpeem*, literally 'older father', or more formally as *yaab*, and to a grandmother of either line as *ma-kpeem*, literally 'older mother', or more formally as *yaab-pɔk*. Grandparents are addressed by personal name or, in the case of grandmothers, by the clan name used for them by their affines. A grandchild is described as *yaaŋ* by any of its grandparents and addressed by his or her own name.

603 The essential feature of the relationship between grandchild and grandparent is that they can tease and joke with each other and each other's spouses. As we have seen, between parent and child this would be almost equal to sacrilege. A grandchild can tweak his grandparent's ear—hence the diviner's sign for grandparent, pointing to the ear—or pretend to mock him or her as 'an old baggage (*bonkɔrəga*)' or play practical jokes on them such as snatching at their food. Grandparents, reciprocally, tease their grandchildren, calling them 'you ugly thing (*bonlɔrəga*)', or by similar epithets that would be insults in another genealogical context. This joking relationship holds for both sets of grandparents, and serves the purpose of reconciling the potentially conflicting elements in their relationship.[1]

With it goes an intimacy and mutual trust, more particularly between

[1] Cf. the similar usage between siblings-in-law, p. 120. Joking in the present case reconciles the familiarity permissible on the grounds of personal interest and the social equivalence of alternate generations, with the respect due to grandparents because of their age and their lineage status.

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CHAPTER X

SIBLINGS IN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The Concept of 'mabiirət'

TALLENSI make a distinction between kinship that implies a difference of generation, summed up in the concept *dɔŋam*, and kinship that implies identity or equality of generation, summed up in the concept *mabiirət*.[1] *Mabii* (lit. mother's child) is the general term for a sibling of either sex and of any degree of consanguinity, and it is extended, as we have shown in our previous volume, to corporate groups, linked by patrilineal descent, that are of equal status. Its primary reference is to a sibling by the same parents as the speaker's when only the fact of siblingship is relevant—that is, when difference of age or sex is not relevant to the situation. Tallensi sometimes use the term in contrast with *babii* (lit. father's child), a usage that indicates very neatly the underlying implications of the term *mabii*. Thus Tallensi say that a man's *mabiis* have first claim on the inheritance of his widows, but that his *babiis* are also entitled to marry the widows. To the native this means that a man's brothers of the same *dug* have a stronger claim than his clansmen of other *dugət*—*dug* here being a lineage segment defined relatively to the agnatic distance between a particular suitor for a widow's hand and the deceased. A man of the same inner lineage as the deceased will call himself a *mabii* of the latter by contrast with another suitor of a different inner lineage but the same medial lineage; and the latter will call himself a *mabii* of the deceased by contrast with a more distant clansman, whom he will describe as a *babii*. Thus the use of the term *mabii* implies a relationship between the parties as if they were agnates who have a common progenitrix over and above their patrilineal ties. When a native describes another as his *mabii*, however distant their genealogical ties, he is tacitly implying a close personal element in their relationship for that moment and in that situation, as if they were children of the same parents, by contrast with a pair of distant agnates. A man will speak of a matrilateral relative of a different clan in this way in some situations. Thus a Tongo man, telling me the story of his first visit to Kumasi, related how he had stayed with a *mabii*, a Ba'ari man, who had loaned him the money for his lorry fare. Abroad, in Kumasi or Accra, a Talən speaks of any other Tallensi he meets there as his *mabiis* by contrast with all the foreigners amongst whom they live. And this is not merely a form of words. Abroad, Tallensi who have no ties of kinship or of locality, who would probably never have met or heard of each other at home, assist one another as if they were kinsmen.

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii, p. 117.

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[p. 241]

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The influence of these modifying factors is recognized in the kinship terms used for the sibling relationship. Most of these have already been recorded, but it is convenient to bring them together again in this place. Within the limits of recognized generation differences, siblings never address one another by kinship terms, but always by name. Outside that range it is also not customary to address people by the kinship terms for siblings, in the ordinary way. When the terms are used it is either as a gesture of courtesy or half in jest, to single out a person from a group; or they are used in addressing distant clansmen or members of linked clans with whom one is not well acquainted. The usage conforms to the rule that kinship terms—other than those for mother (*ma*) and parent-in-law (*deema*)—are not as a rule used in addressing close relatives and are chiefly used towards distant relatives as a sign of special respect or courtesy. On the other hand, the terms for siblings are regularly used in referring to or making statements about brothers and sisters.

Tau (pl. *tap*) is the term for a sibling of opposite sex to the speaker or the subject of a statement. A man will say '*N-tau n-el Ba'arɔ*—My sister is married to this place Ba'ari'; and a woman, '*N-yɛa n-tau yiri*—I am going to my brother's homestead.' The term *tau* has no age significance, as age differences do not affect the social relations of opposite sex siblings, but the suffixes *-kpeem* (senior) and *-bil* (junior) can be added for descriptive clarity.

An elder sibling of the same sex is *bier* (pl. *biernam*), a younger is *pit* (pl. *pirəba*).

A sibling by the same mother (whether or not the father is the same) is called *soog* (pl. *saarət*) without reference to sex or age; but sex and relative age can be indicated by combining *soog* with the preceding terms. Thus *tasoog* is a *soog* of the opposite sex; *bier-soog* is an older *soog* sibling of the same sex; *pit-soog* is a younger *soog* sibling of the same sex. These terms, as we have seen,[1] are extended to all uterine kin.

A sibling of different maternal origin is described by the term *sunzɔ* (pl. *sunzɔp*). Anyone who can be regarded as a sibling by the rules of classificatory kinship may be referred to thus, and the term is also used in corporate relations to denote co-ordinate lineage segments.[2] By itself *sunzɔ* may indicate a patrilineal sibling of either sex, but the suffixes *-pɔk* (female) and *-doog* (male) are often added to indicate the sex of the person referred to.

The Solidarity of 'soog' Siblings

The interplay of the various factors that mould the relations of siblings can best be understood by studying their genetic development. True siblings always grow up together in their natal family through the formative years of childhood, whether they remain together after adolescence or separate. Thus the mutual attachment and identity of

[1] Cf. Ch. II above.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii, p. 201.

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spoke of their ancestral home at Zubiuŋ as their 'real home (*ti yir ni yɛlmeŋər*)' to which they would all return sooner or later. Two years later, in fact, both Saanbuohba and Baŋ-Duun did return to Zubiuŋ.

As these examples show, though the solidarity of siblings derives its psychological content from the fact of their growing up together, its validity as a norm of social relations among siblings is a function of the total field of lineage relations. In other words, whatever the personal relations of siblings may be, their indestructible social bonds spring from their common jural and ritual relationship to their parents; and 'sibling' in this context stands not only for individuals but for lineages, while 'parent' stands for any ancestor that may be relevant in a particular situation.

We must add that the friction which sibling rivalry between brothers occasionally gives rise to does not come to an end with their economic and residential separation. Self-interest among Tallensi provokes clashes of personality and of rights as much as anywhere else in the world. Tallensi say that the gravest disputes between brothers of the same nuclear lineage arise over land, though such disputes are very rare. Unlike the petty squabbles of day-to-day life, they are apt to end in blows and even bloodshed. I heard of several instances that had occurred during the previous thirty years, but only one came to my notice during my stay among the Tallensi. It was, however, a typical case. When Gunyam died, his sons Taagbin and Zayahkpɛmɔre inherited his lands and chattels, with Taagbin, the oldest son, as the senior heir. Taagbin allocated a portion of their late father's home farm to his younger brother. But the latter objected that he was being unfairly treated. The dispute ended in a fight in which Zayahkpɛmɔre was injured in the hand. Public opinion was severely critical of Zayahkpɛmɔre; for, as a Tale saying goes, an older brother who inherits his father's property and position is like one's father and should be treated with similar respect. But, as an elder of their section shrewdly pointed out when we were discussing this case, stupid as he is reputed to be, Zayahkpɛmɔre would never have raised his hand against Taagbin if the latter had been his proxy father and not his brother. Brothers quarrel just because they have equal rights in relation to one another.

There are two offences, however, which irrevocably disrupt the bonds of brotherhood if one brother commits either of them against another. As we have previously stated, it is a grave sin for a man to seduce the wife of a brother of the same inner or medial lineage. If this happens, the Tallensi say, the injured man and the culprit 'will never eat together again, will never sacrifice together again'. Because of this taboo a man may not sit on the same sleeping-mat as his brother's wife. 'It is as if he wanted to sleep with her', the natives say. Hence, also, it is considered to be improper for a man to address his brother's wife while he is alive as wife (*pɔŋa*), though he may speak of her to non-members

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of the same inner lineage as 'our wife (*ti pɔɣa*)' or even as 'my wife (*m-pɔɣa*)'; and, reciprocally, a woman speaks of her husband's brother of the same inner lineage as 'my husband (*n-sɛt*)' or, preferably, as 'my husband's older (younger) brother (*n-sɛt-bier* or *n-sɛt-pit*)', but does not address him thus. The proper reciprocal term of address is *n-kpee* ('my neighbour'), or *n-dakii* ('my sibling-in-law'). The terms for husband and wife are used in address only between a man and a distant clan-brother's wife.

The penalty for breaking this taboo has both a literal and a figurative meaning, in the sense that the brothers will never share anything again or take part in corporate activities as co-members of the same lineage. It amounts to social and religious ostracism for the sinner, and Tallensi say he would not long survive or his line of descent would perish. A similar penalty is said to follow the killing of a brother, whether it happens by accident or design. As we know, incest with a brother's wife is said to occur, though extremely rarely; fratricide by a brother of the same inner lineage as the victim is felt to be so abhorrent as to be likely to happen only by accident in exceptional circumstances. It has happened once or twice in the past, informants say, when brothers fought over the division of farm-land, but I have not heard of any cases having occurred in the last thirty years or so.[1]

The strength of the sanction we are considering can be judged from its incidence, in an attenuated degree, in cases of intra-clan homicide where the parties are not brothers of the same inner lineage. If this happens, whether intentionally or by accident, the maxim 'A cow has trampled her calf to death (*naaf n-nɔ bu bii ku*)' applies—that is to say, it is as if a cow had trampled its calf to death; so it is forbidden, on pain of bringing down the wrath of the ancestors, for the victim's close agnates to 'cancel the debt' by killing one of the slayer's close agnates. This rule holds also for lineages or clans interlinked by clanship or ritual ties. The guilty party offers expiatory sacrifices to the Earth and then a ritual reconciliation is effected between the two units concerned. But thenceforth the close agnates of the slayer—members of his nuclear lineage, usually—will not participate in a sacrifice in which the close agnates of the victim take part. If the homicide was deliberate, this taboo will even extend to all the patrilineal descendants of the two men. Thus Wakii-Sagbarug yidem and Kuruugdem are adjacent maximal lineages linked by clanship and ritual ties. On certain occasions they meet to sacrifice together at an Earth shrine common to them. The Kuruug people refrain from attending these sacrifices if the chief officiant is a member of a particular segment of Sagbarug yiri. A Kuruug man told me the reason for this in confidence. Some four or five

[1] There is a legend that one of the early chiefs of Tongo slew his brother in order to get the chiefship. Tallensi say this was following the customs of the Mamprusi. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

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voice in the disposal of bride-price payments always lies with the head of the joint family. He has to strike a balance between the different claims that have to be met; but other things being equal he will earmark at least a portion of a daughter's bride-price for her *soog* brother's use in espousing a wife, or if he has a wife, her nearest *sunzɔ* brother. Tallensi say that a self-respecting man should be specially scrupulous in this matter with his proxy children, but that sometimes proxy fathers are not. I have known elders of the inner lineage put pressure on a man to abide by the rule. Thus one of the grouses Sinkawol had against his proxy father Tiezien was that the latter had refused to part with cattle received for Sinkawol's *soog* sister in order to secure a second wife for Sinkawol or his *soog* brother. By contrast, one of the few things in favour of Na'abzɔ was that he allowed his proxy son Siŋ (who was farming on his own) to keep the money received in payment of Siŋ's half-sister's bride-price, against the day when Siŋ would need it himself to pay bride-price. Siŋ, incidentally, prudently handed over the money for safe-keeping to a friend, lest he himself should be tempted to fritter it away in meeting petty needs, or, worse still, lest Na'abzɔ should suddenly demand it for the payment of some debt that had meanwhile become urgent. This convention, in short, represents not a right to a sister's bride-price but an acknowledgement of the social equivalence of siblings.

Conventionalized joking between a man and his wife's siblings (in the widest classificatory sense of all her clan-siblings), and of a woman with her husband's sisters and his more distant clansmen, is another indication of the social equivalence of siblings. We have discussed this before and need only draw attention here to the associated custom by which a man is allowed to sleep with a wife's unmarried sister who comes on a visit. It is very difficult to ascertain how far this custom is actually practised. Men say it was commoner in the old days when girls were not married off, as they often are now, before puberty, but at a somewhat later age. None of the men I knew best claimed to have slept with a sister-in-law; but several said they had 'played' (*deem*)—a euphemism for flirtation ending in stealthy sex relations—with visiting sisters-in-law of one of their near clansmen. At the same time, in joking with a sister-in-law or talking about a sister-in-law men always emphasize this custom, as if it were an unchallengeable right.

Another illustration associated with the joking relationship between siblings-in-law is the terminology used between them. A man's sisters speak of his wife—and sometimes address her, half jokingly—as 'our wife (*ti pɔŋa*)' and the wife uses the reciprocal term 'husband' (*sɛɛ*) in the same way of them. I once heard a girl of about 9 address her sister-in-law thus. Pretending ignorance, I asked her why she did so. 'Our wife (she is)', came the answer, with a gesture of disdain that amused the wife, 'Have we not given cows for her?'

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602 differences; the principle of lineage continuity. It is because all three principles enter into it that the relationship of mother's brother and sister's son has a jural and ritual coefficient.

Kinship Terms

601 Before we go any farther it will be convenient to list all the kinship terms used in this context by the Tallensi (see diagram, p. 285). As 602 usual, they are primarily terms of reference, rarely used as terms of address between direct relatives of the particular classes. A man never addresses his own mother's brother as *ahəb*, but always by his name, and vice versa. These terms are used as terms of address only in speaking to distant relatives of that class who are not personally well known to the speaker and therefore have to be addressed somewhat formally, or as a special gesture of courtesy. Thus Kpanaraana, during a case at the chief's court, said to the girl whose marriage was in dispute: 'My grandmother (*m-ma-kpeema*), tell us your story.' This was a gesture of courtesy because the girl was a clanswoman of his paternal grandmother. Similarly Ga'ab always addressed my clerk Naaho, who was probably his junior by twenty-five years, as *n-qhəba*, because his mother was a clanswoman of Naaho, and his relationship with the latter was purely formal.

A person describes his or her mother's brother as his or her *ahəb* (pl. *ahəbnam*), and is described as *ahəŋ* (pl. *ahəs*) irrespective of sex. There is, significantly, no term for mother's brother's wife. She may be described as 'the wife of my *ahəb* (*n-ahəb pɔŋa*)', and be addressed by her clan name; or she may be described metaphorically, and addressed respectfully, as 'mother (*ma*)'. Similarly, there is no term for the spouse of an *ahəŋ*. I have heard men speak of a sister's son's wife as *ahəŋ*—by identifying her with her husband—and as *deema* (in-law), or *bii* (child)—by the speaker identifying himself with his sister. By a similar identification a man may address his sister's son's wife as *ma* (mother), just as if he were her husband's father, or he may use her clan name. Corresponding usages apply in speaking of and addressing a sister's daughter's husband.

A mother's father is referred to as 'grandfather' (*yaab* or *ba-kpeem*) and a mother's mother as 'grandmother' (*ma-kpeem*). The reciprocal term is *yaaŋ*, grandchild of either sex. But grandparents and grandchildren address each other by name.

The mother's brother's children are described and referred to as 'mother's brother's children (*ahəb biis*)' or as 'siblings of the same (or opposite) sex (*bier*, *pit*, *tau*)'. But, as we shall observe presently, there are many significant situations in which a mother's brother's son is identified with his father and called *ahəb*. Mother's brother's child and father's sister's child address each other by name. They describe one

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another's spouses as siblings-in-law (*dakii*) and address them by name, or by the kinship term if they wish to be specially courteous. But as Tallensi often point out, all such terms transferred by metaphor from the lineage context to a matrilateral context are used in a figurative sense. 'It is a figure of speech only (*la a nuoni maa*—lit. it is only of the mouth)', they say.

The father's sister, it should be added, is described as *ba-pɔk* (pl.

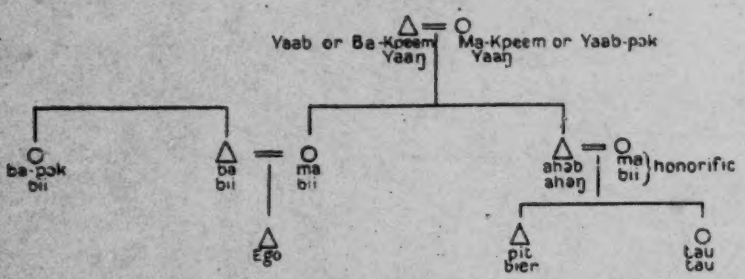

FIG. 6. Kinship terms used by Ego (top) and their reciprocals (bottom).

ba-pɔknam) (female father)—an apt description of her social position in relation to Ego—and is addressed by her name. Another term of reference for the father's sister is *pugərəba*.[1] It is not commonly used for the father's own sister, however, but for a classificatory father's sister or father's father's sister. The father's sister's husband is referred to descriptively or metaphorically as *ba* (father) and is addressed by his name, or as 'father', as a mark of special courtesy. A woman refers to her brother's children as her 'children (*bii*)', identifying herself, as this suggests, in sentiment and behaviour with their father. She and their spouses call one another *deema* (in-law). She may use this term in addressing them and they in speaking to her, if they are not well acquainted; or the father's sister may address her brother's son's wife by her clan name or as 'mother', as if she were the girl's parent-in-law; and she will usually address a brother's daughter's husband by his name.

An incidental point of interest emerges from a consideration of the kinship terminology used in this context. It appears, and observation shows this to be a fact, that the spouses of matrilateral and sororal kin do not come into the picture directly. A man is only interested in his mother's brother's wife, for instance, in so far as her welfare and behaviour affect his mother's brother's and his children's welfare. He has no direct social relationship with her.

The classificatory extensions of these terms will be considered later.

[1] This is the Mampele variant of *ba-pɔk*, commonly used instead of the latter term among the Mamprusi. Etymologically *ba-pɔk* is 'father-female' and *pugərəba* is probably compounded of 'woman (*puy*)' and 'father (*ba*)'.

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the basic rules of inter-personal sentiment and conduct for extra-clan kin and for members of one clan or lineage. As in the lineage, so among extra-clan kin, the pattern of sentiment and conduct we have sketched has greater force with close than with distant kin. The differences between kinship within the lineage and kinship outside the lineage lie less in the sphere of individual sentiment and conduct than in the different structural implications of the two kinds of social ties.

The Classificatory Extension of Extra-clan Kinship

At the outset of this chapter we referred to the classificatory extension of extra-clan kinship ties. This requires further elucidation. In the early stages of my field-work this aspect of Tale kinship seemed to me extraordinarily confused. The natives seemed to label any extra-clan kinsman a 'mother's brother (*ahəb*)' or 'sister's child (*ahəŋ*)' quite indiscriminately. The only distinction they appeared to make was in terms of generation differences. A person was apparently labelled a 'sister's son' if he was related to the speaker through any ancestress who was a member of the latter's clan, and he was described as a 'mother's brother' if the woman forming the link was the speaker's mother or ancestress and a member of the other person's clan.

This apparent confusion soon resolves itself into an orderly picture if the three principles in accordance with which kinsfolk are identified with one another are applied. In addition we must take into account the socio-spatial distribution of these kinship ties, and, especially, the time dimension without which no aspect of Tale social structure can be understood. Naturally the natives themselves do not consciously use such general conceptions in sorting out their kinship bonds; to them it is simply a question of spontaneous adjustment within the everlasting stream of social relations.

The most important of these factors is the lineage principle. An indication of this is found in the constant reference made by natives to their mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yiri*) or maternal grandfather's lineage (*yaab yiri*). If a native is asked about his matrilateral kin the first thing he mentions is his *ahəb yiri*—the clan and perhaps clan segment of his mother's brother. The interpretation given to the concept *yiri* varies according to the situation, and follows the rules that govern its usage within the clan or lineage. For instance, I went to Tenzugu one day accompanied by two Tongo men. When we reached Kpata'ar one of them said 'This is my *ahəb yiri*', and explained that his mother was a Kpata'ar woman (*pɔɣayabəlɔg*). A little later he stopped and broke off a couple of heads of ripe millet in a farm through which the path wound. I twitted him with stealing other people's crops. 'No', he replied, 'this is my *ahəb yiri*. This is La'ab's farm and I am an *ahəŋ* of his *dug*. They won't object to my taking a few heads of millet.' Thus

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at first he was using *ahəb yiri* to refer to the clan and later he used it for the inner lineage of his mother's brother.

In keeping with the principles of lineage structure, a man visualizes his relationship with his mother's patrilineal kin as having three degrees. There is, firstly, his bond with his 'true *ahəb* (*ahəb ni yɛlmɪŋər*)'—his mother's full (*soog*) brother, if she has one, or her oldest paternal half (*sunzɔ*) brother. This is the man who will sacrifice on his sister's son's behalf (if *his* father is dead). Apart from this there is no distinction between the 'true *ahəb*' and his brothers of the same nuclear lineage. The next level is that of the mother's brother's *dug*, his inner or at most medial lineage. A sister's son describes this *dug* collectively as his *ahəb yiri*, or, by contraposition with the clan, as his *ahəb dug*. Like any member of this inner lineage he distinguishes between its members in accordance with the rules of classificatory kinship. That is, the men whom his *ahəb* calls 'father' he calls 'grandfather', and he jokes with them; the men and women whom his *ahəb* calls siblings he calls *ahəb* or mother; and he describes those whom his *ahəb* calls his children as brothers and sisters. He may not marry a daughter of this inner lineage, and if he has sexual relations with one it is as disgraceful as if she were his close agnatic sister. He may not court a widow of any man of this inner lineage whom he calls *ahəb*, and if he seduces the wife of such a man it is incest. He may in theory court the widow of a member of this *dug* whom his mother's brother calls 'son' and whom he, therefore, regards as a sort of brother.

Finally, there is the level of his mother's brother's clan beyond the range of his inner lineage. Again the rules of classificatory kinship in the clan context apply. Beyond the range of his mother's brother's inner lineage a man does not distinguish between members of his mother's brother's lineage (his *ahəb yidɛm*) by generation. He can marry a daughter of the clan, or court a widow of any man of the clan, at this range.

Reciprocally, a man calls a child of a daughter of his inner lineage 'an *ahəŋ* of our *dug* (*ti dug ahəŋ*)', and a child of a daughter of a different inner lineage of the clan 'an *ahəŋ* of our lineage (or clan) (*ti yir ahəŋ*)'. There are a number of ritual ceremonies at which all the segments of a clan or maximal lineage must be present. Funerals of politico-ritual functionaries such as tendaanas, and the ceremony by which a man takes over the custody of a lineage *bəŋar* shrine, are ceremonies of this kind. *Ahəs* of every branch of the clan usually attend such ceremonies. Then they are divided into two groups: *dugni ahəs*, those who are linked through their mother or an ancestress to the inner lineage responsible for the ceremony; and *yɛŋha ahəs*, outside *ahəs*, whose mothers or ancestresses came from other segments of the clan.

The lineage principle operating in relation to the flux of time introduces a new feature. A man dies and in due course his social roles pass

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to one of his sons. The son now assumes the duties his father had as a mother's brother. He now sacrifices on behalf of his father's sister's sons and becomes their *ahəb* in function. So a mother's brother's son is, in certain situations, called *ahəb* by identification with his father in accordance with the lineage principle, even while his father is still alive—in anticipation, as it were, of the role he will one day have. On the same principle a sister's son's son may be identified with his father in relation to the latter's mother's brother's sons and lineage. Thus Ɔmara once introduced a young man from Gorogo to me as his *ahəb*. I expressed surprise, as I knew his mother came from Woo. He then explained that the young man was really his father's *ahəb* (*ba ahəb*)—not, of course, his father's true mother's brother, but the grandson and successor of the latter.

Through the operation of the lineage principle such a relationship can, in theory, go on for ever. The mother's brother's role—progressively attenuated, as we shall see presently—passes from one generation of the original mother's brother's agnatic descendants to the next. And this brings out a point of importance. The crucial element in the mother's brother's role is his duty to sacrifice to his ancestors on his sister's son's behalf whenever the latter requests it. By the lineage principle the latter cannot sacrifice to his maternal ancestors directly at their original home. The mother's brother is bound to perform this duty or else suffer the wrath of his ancestors. He can refuse only if his *ahəŋ* has very gravely offended him. Then this duty becomes a right which he uses as a sanction. He receives no recompense for this other than his prescribed share of the animal sacrificed, which must always be provided by the sister's son. The mother's brother's role goes with this right of sacrificing to his lineage ancestors' spirits. Hence, after the death of all of the grandfather's sons—all the true mother's brothers—it is in fact vested in the head of the lineage descended from the grandfather.

Now let us glance for a moment at the other side of the relationship, the sister's son's position. A man has no interest in or bonds with any of his sister's children's agnates except her children. They are not his kin through his sister. In theory he or his son can marry any of his sister's children's female agnates if they are not related to one another by another link. In practice such marriages with a woman member of the sister's husband's inner lineage are not countenanced. One objection is that the girl might be a proxy or classificatory daughter of the sister, which would make the marriage seem incestuous. A stronger objection is that such a marriage would amount to exchanging one woman for another. This the Tallensi disapprove of on the grounds that it must inevitably breed discord between the two lineages concerned. It is incongruous for the same inner lineages to be both sons-in-law and fathers-in-law to one another. You cannot, as the natives put it, both owe bride-price to and claim bride-price from the same man, or owe filial respect to and

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be entitled to filial respect from the same person. The objection does not hold outside the range of the sister's husband's inner lineage. An *ahəb* is concerned only with his sister's own children; and *his* agnatic descendants are genealogically related and socially concerned only with *their* descendants—that is to say, with the matri-segment (sprung from the sister of the original *ahəb*) of the lineage sprung from her husband. Such is the history—or, more frequently, the putative history—lying behind the *ahəb–ahəŋ* relationships of lineages of different clans with one another. Every lineage and every segment of a lineage has its *ahəb yiri* in this sense. When the relationship (whether real or putative) is assumed to be remote it may have only a ceremonial function or may serve as an explanation of clanship linkage; when it is not too remote it emerges from time to time in ritual or jural activities. And it follows from the structure of the lineage that the farther back by number of generations the relationship is located, the wider will be the span of the lineages concerned.

There is a further complication. A woman's children have a tie, through her, with her *ahəb yiri*—their mother's mother's brother's lineage (*ma ahəb yiri*). This is a bond of a rather limited and formal significance; nevertheless it is kinship (*dəɣam*); it prohibits marriage between a man and a woman who are directly related by such a route, and it often emerges in ritual relations. Indeed a man and his sister's, or father's sister's, daughter's son may be on terms of friendship and special intimacy, if, as is quite possible, they are clansmen or neighbours. The friendship of Pumaan and Saɣəbazaa, both of Tongo, went back to a relationship of this kind; and Saɣəbazaa, who was in the mother's father's position, spoke of Pumaan as his 'grandson (*yaaŋ*)'. By the lineage principle a relationship of this kind can be sustained for several generations, but it tends to fade out with the passage of the generations. Still more roundabout extra-clan genealogical connexions are recognized in special circumstances, the parties being linked by various combinations of male and female antecedents.

A relationship such as that of Saɣəbazaa and Pumaan is assimilated to the pattern of mother's father–daughter's son relationship. As this shows, there are two categories of extra-clan extended kinship ties. One type is assimilated to the *ahəb–ahəŋ* (mother's brother–sister's child) tie, and the other to the *yaab–yaaŋ* (mother's father–daughter's child) tie. The criterion is simple. If two individuals or lineages are linked through one woman (i.e. at a remove of one generation) only, they are *ahəb* and *ahəŋ* to each other: if the chain of genealogical connexions includes more than one woman (i.e. more than one female generation—a woman and her mother), making it a secondary matrilateral tie, the parties are *yaab* and *yaaŋ* to each other. Thus Ləyani called himself, in various contexts, an *ahəŋ* of Təŋ-Puhug, because his own mother came from there; an *ahəŋ* of Gorogo because his father's mother came from that place; and

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also an *ahəŋ* of Sie and of Toŋ Kuorəg because other patrilineal ancestors of his were *ahəs* of those clans. But when he was explaining his various ancestor shrines to me he accounted for his possession of one on the grounds of his being a *yaaŋ* of Sək—his patrilineal great-great-grandfather's mother's mother having been a daughter of Sək; and for another on the ground of his being an Arogo *yaaŋ*, since his mother's mother's mother came from Arogo. The distinction between *ahəŋ* and *yaaŋ* in this sense implies corresponding differences in social relations. It follows, as can easily be seen, from combining the principle of lineage continuity with that of sibling equivalence.

Our analysis shows that the extension and transference of extra-clan kinship ties through the social system is not an indiscriminate lumping together of classes or groups of relatives. It is strictly regulated by the basic principles on which that system is built up. We must not forget, however, that the majority of these derivative social ties are only potential. The more distant or indirect they are the less frequently and the less effectively do they emerge in the form of actual social relations. We shall come back to this presently.

The diagram overleaf summarizes the results of the preceding analysis.

The Nuclear Relationship of Mother's Brother and Sister's Son

All extra-clan kinship ties, except those of uterine kin, are rooted in the relationship of mother's brother and sister's child. We proceed now to study this relationship in greater detail.[1]

Tallensi say that a mother's brother is a 'sort of father (*u yman ni i ba*—lit. he is like your father)', and a sister's child is 'like your own child (*u yman ni i bii*)'. These expressions conjure up, to the native, a picture of a personal and lifelong mutual interest and attachment similar to that of parent and child. How deeply it goes depends on the character and disposition of the individuals concerned, but it is always there. In part it is no more than a continuation of the interest a woman's close lineage kin have in her children, but it has distinctive features of its own and is counted of more value and importance than a maternal grandparent's interest in a daughter's children.

When a girl becomes pregnant for the first time her husband sends a message to her parents. Later, about the fourth or fifth month of her pregnancy, her mother sends one of her close co-wives to bind the girl with a perineal band (*suol voog*). This is a proud moment for her, as the perineal band shows her to have left maidenhood behind and to have entered the ranks of the matrons (*poyayaay*, pl. *poyayaas*). Then, before

[1] The starting-point of this analysis is Radcliffe-Brown's theory of the social equivalence of the mother's brother to his sister in relation to her children, first expounded in his article 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', loc. cit. 'Sister's son' in this chapter stands for 'sister's child of either sex', except when the context shows that a male is meant.

[Text continued on p. 301.—ANALYST]

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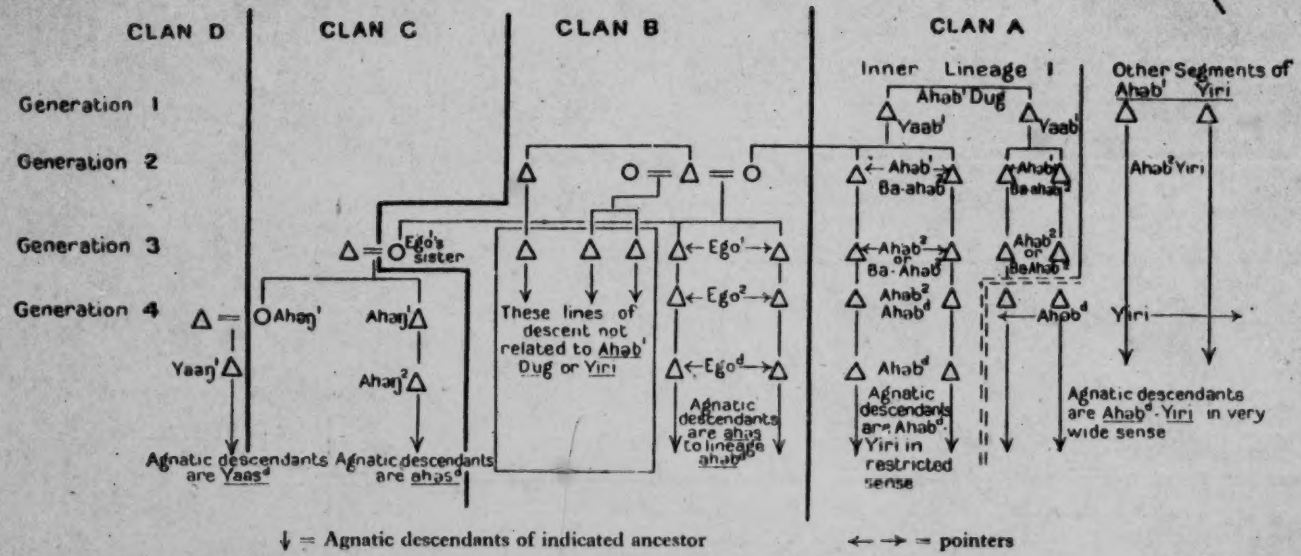

FIG. 8. The extension of *Ahəb–Ahəŋ* relations.

The diagram reads as follows: Ego¹'s true mother's brothers are designated *Ahəb*¹, Ego¹ calls them *Ahəb*, Ego² (Ego's son) calls these men *Ba-ahəb*, hence they are also designated *Ba-ahəb*³. Egoᵈ (Ego¹'s agnatic descendant) calls *Ahəb*¹'s agnatic descendants *ahəb*, hence they are designated *Ahəb*ᵈ. Similarly with all the other relationships placed on the diagram. The index figure or letter shows what the Ego bearing the same index calls that person or group.

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CHAPTER XII

THE FUNCTIONS OF KINSHIP

OUR study has made it clear that the recognition of genealogical relationships in the ordering of social life has an extremely wide range of application among the Tallensi. To be sure, some classes of social relations in which individuals or organized groups normally participate do not necessarily imply cognizance of genealogical connexions. There are the activities of buyers and sellers in the market-place, for example. These are transactions in which kinship may, but for the most part does not, play a critical part. If it comes into the picture it does so as an adventitious factor, not as an intrinsic constitutive element. Even between kinsfolk transactions in the market are ruled by considerations of price, costs, profits, supply, and demand. A man who goes to market to buy a cap will not patronize a kinsman who has caps for sale if he can get one cheaper from a stranger. But it may happen that a seller of caps will be satisfied with a slightly smaller margin of profit if the buyer is his kinsman than if he is a stranger.

Apart from such ephemeral inter-personal relations, there are lasting social ties, such as those of friendship (*zoot*), which do not necessarily presuppose genealogical connexions. It is a common thing for Tallensi, especially for men, to have friends (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) in other clans than their own, and nowadays in neighbouring tribes. Friends visit one another occasionally, help one another sometimes, and give one another gifts. A man may also have a woman friend (*zɔm*), usually the wife of one of his clansmen. The man takes small gifts to his *zɔm* from time to time and she reciprocates by cooking a meal for him. She may assist him to find a wife from among her clan sisters. But if friends are not necessarily kinsmen, they very often have common kin. In fact friendships between unrelated Tallensi are most often formed through one of the parties visiting a kinsman of the other party and so making his acquaintance. Many friendships arise from contacts at funeral ceremonies or when hoeing or building parties come to help a father- or brother-in-law. In any case, the commonest and most prized form of friendship is friendship with a clansman or a neighbour of a related clan. Many such friendships go back to childhood and are the more highly prized because they are voluntary, personal, and not subject to hard-and-fast rules.

In the same way, though the Tallensi do not have institutionalized age-grades, men or women of about the same degree of social maturity are often grouped together in situations in which many people of all ages play a part. One sees this very clearly on ceremonial occasions. At funeral ceremonies, for example, there is first of all the usual separation

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of the spheres of the two sexes. The sphere of the women is within the homestead. There they stay most of the time and there they carry out the duties that fall to them. The sphere of the men is outside, in front of the gateway, in the cattle yard and the *zɔŋ* (cf. p. 53). All the public rites take place outside. But in addition there is a distribution of tasks, duties, and privileges in accordance with a broad stratification by seniority. The oldest people in both spheres are spoken of as the elders (*kpɛm*). They have the seats of honour. For the most part they merely advise, and if hitches arise exercise a somewhat distant supervision over the activities. If they take an active part it is only in the most important of the rites. But they have the highest privileges. When food or meat or beer is distributed it is the elders who receive the portions due to the lineage units they represent and take the largest share of these portions. It is the old women, too, who take the lion's share of the gifts and obligatory contributions of foodstuffs handed over to the womenfolk. The burden of managing the ceremonies, performing the complicated series of rites, and attending to the many practical tasks involved, such as digging the grave, slaughtering sacrificial animals, and preparing food and beer, falls on the men who 'come after the elders (*kpɛm tayalis*)' and their female counterparts. The *kpɛm tayalis* are the men of mature experience but still able-bodied, men in the late forties and early fifties, the corresponding stratum among the women being those who have adolescent children. The young men and women, assisted by the adolescent boys and girls, do the fetching and carrying and give any casual help that may be required. The boys have the privilege of plucking and roasting any fowls that are slaughtered and keep some of the titbits for themselves. The girls surfeit themselves with frequent tasting of porridge and oily bean stew while they are cooking. This pattern can be observed in any collective activity.

Such arrangements, informal products though they are of the pragmatic requirements of the situation, are so stereotyped that they can be called customary. They arise without reference to genealogical connexions. But it is characteristic of Tale social life that they do so in situations whose structure is determined by kinship and clanship institutions. In fact the ideology of kinship is so dominant in Tale society, and the web of genealogical connexions so extensive, that no social relationships or events fall completely outside the orbit of kinship. In this respect the Tallensi resemble very many other primitive societies among whom, as Firth puts it,[1] kinship is the articulating principle of social organization. Just because kinship acts as a major determinant of social behaviour in every aspect and department of social life, it is the basis of the machinery of social integration in societies of this type, as many studies in Africa, Oceania, and America have shown. The result, as we have seen, both in this book and in the first part of our study, is that

[1] Raymond Firth, *We, the Tikopia*, 1936, p. 577.

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the concept of kinship is the primary category of Tale thought about the social relations of individuals and the structure of the society.

Firth has stated (op. cit., p. 575) that kinship institutions can be studied from many different angles. But clearly, all kinship institutions have only two major facets or, if we like, functions. They serve as a mechanism of organizing social activities and co-ordinating social relations, either in a limited sector of the social life or in relation to all social interests; and they at the same time constitute the primary mould of the individual's psycho-social development. To assert, as Malinowski virtually does,[1] that the latter aspect gives the master-key to the understanding of primitive kinship institutions is as one-sided as to deny its relevance for their sociological study altogether. Much futile controversy has turned on a confusion of these two aspects of social relations. It is true that the affective relations of parents and children during the latters' infancy, the sentiments, habits, and emotional attachments acquired in the setting of the domestic family in childhood, and the deeper-lying factors of personality, all colour the behaviour of kinsfolk of every degree to one another. But it is equally true that the socially effective ties of kinship and the values correlated with them, which exist as a part of the social system at a given time irrespective of the individual, have a powerful selective influence in the shaping of his psychological environment and, consequently, on his eventual personality. We are concerned with two distinct levels of organization and expression in the structure of human social behaviour, and neither can be reduced to the other.

A complete understanding of the significance of its institutions for a particular society calls for an investigation on both levels. That is not what we have attempted in this book. Our study has been focused on the function of kinship as the articulating principle of Tale social structure. We have taken into account the genetic development in the individual of the modal patterns of thought, action, sentiment, and emotion which emerge in kinship relations, only in so far as this development is a dynamic factor in the social structure or can be directly correlated with the operation of kinship in standard and recurrent social relations. We have, for example, given little space to the genetic development of speech habits in the child, though this is relevant for the understanding of how kinship terminology is learnt, because this would shed little light on our main inquiry.

Among the Tallensi kinship relations are a major determinant of the pattern of organization of all activities through which the ruling interests of the people are satisfied. This holds for all departments of Tale social life—for the activities concerned with the production and consumption of food and all other material goods, for those involved in the reproduction and rearing of offspring, for those concerned with maintaining the rights and duties of individuals and corporate units towards one another,

[1] See his article s.v. 'Kinship', *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th ed.

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and for religious and ceremonial activities. By abstracting the constant features in the patterns of organization of all the activities in which a particular kinship relation is significant, we arrive at a formulation of that relation as an element of the social structure. Tale kinship relations are embedded in social activities, but they are not coterminous with any one category of social activities. They are not reducible to economic relations either in their technological or in their social aspects; nor can they be derived exclusively from Tale jural concepts, or ritual beliefs, or political institutions. They are expressed and maintained by all these elements of the social system, but they exist in their own right. And the evidence of comparative studies, which show that similar kinship systems are found in different economic, jural, and ritual contexts bears this out. It is as plausible to argue that kinship ideas lie behind the economic or jural or religious customs of the natives as the other way round. Nor can the Tale kinship system be accounted for on the grounds of utility. Kinship relations are useful to the individual and serve the ends of social well-being for the society as a whole. But they are also very often extremely onerous for the individual; and their social utility springs simply from the fact that they play a vital part in the organization of all the activities that make up and maintain the social system.

Kinship, in short, among the Tallensi as among many other primitive peoples, is one of the irreducible principles on which their organized social life depends. Another irreducible factor in their social life is their traditional economy; and a third is their system of ritual beliefs and values. In the Tale social system these three categories of social facts are so closely interdependent that they cannot be satisfactorily understood in isolation from one another. They appear as functions of one another in the structure of society. But kinship taken as a system of values, a body of rules of conduct, and a scheme of social relations, is unique in that it is the master principle of organization both for particular activities and for the social structure as a whole. Thus we find that there cannot, for example, be gross divergence between the rules governing the ownership and use of land or other productive property, and those governing the application of labour to production or the consumption of the products of labour, since both sets of rules are aspects of the jural relations of a specific group of kinsfolk by birth and marriage. Similarly, the religious beliefs of the natives cannot be grossly inconsistent with their actual social behaviour since they have a common context of social organization in relationships determined by kinship. The wrongdoings or aberrations of individuals do not alter this fact; sooner or later the norms are vindicated and their consistency *inter se* is reaffirmed.

We have been speaking of kinship in the broadest sense of all socially recognized genealogical ties. In this sense Tale social structure is, fundamentally, kinship writ large. But we have found that it is essential

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to distinguish two aspects of kinship relations, that of lineage organization and that of inter-personal kinship ties. We have particularly stressed the major distinction between these two aspects. The lineage system is built up exclusively on the recognition of the agnatic line of descent and provides the framework of corporate groupings upon which Tale political and jural institutions are founded, whereas inter-personal kinship ties are recognized between cognates of all degrees through either or both parents. These two aspects fuse in what we have called the focal field of kinship, the domestic family. All kinship ties, for the individual, are created in the domestic family; and the family is the mechanism by which the genealogical basis of the social system is continually renewed.

Tale society is an organic society. That is to say, social organization is governed by the same principles at all levels and in every sector of the social structure. The different configurations of social relationships characteristic of different sectors of the social structure are the result of different ways of combining and elaborating the basic principles. The focal field of kinship shows us the basic principles of social structure at work in their simplest and prototypical form.

The structure of this field is determined by the interaction of two categories of social ties, those of parentage and those of marriage. Their interaction gives rise to two concepts of descent that operate as polar principles in the structure of this field.[1] The concept of paternal origin is counterpoised by the concept of maternal origin in every aspect of family life. The structural equilibrium of the domestic organization depends on their complementary functions. At the level of corporate social relations we find a similar structural equilibrium in the lineage system and also in the politico-ritual system that embraces the whole society.[2] At every level the structural equilibrium depends on the mechanism of polarity. It is the play of polar social forces organized round institutions like the chiefship and the tendaanaship, conceptualized in the ancestor cult and the Earth cult, and crystallized in the segmentary structure of the lineage, that gives the equilibrium of Tale society its dynamic character.

The polarity of patrilateral and matrilateral kinship regulates the development of kinship relations in time, as well as their configuration at a given time. If we consider the polarity of patrilateral and matrilateral descent as it works over a stretch of time—e.g. in relation to the cycle of development of the domestic family—a significant generalization emerges. We see, then, that the patrilineal principle is the primary factor of stability and continuity in the organization of the family and

[1] Malinowski brought this out in his writings on kinship theory (e.g. in his essay on *The Father in Primitive Psychology*, Psyche Miniatures, 1926) though he stated it in different terms.

[2] This is described in the *Dynamics of Clanship*.

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601 hence of the entire social structure. Conversely, the recognition of kinship ties through the mother is the primary factor of dispersion and segmentation in the family and the social structure. The values symbolized in the concept of patrilineal descent constitute the chief centripetal force, those summed up in the concept of matrilateral kinship the chief centrifugal force in the structure both of the family and of the society at large.

If we visualize the social structure as a sum of processes in time, then the lineage system, which embodies the patrilineal principle, emerges as the source of the enduring pattern, the relatively fixed form of Tale social organization, and matrilateral kinship is seen to be the source of the variability and flexibility in the groups or in the standard interpersonal relations that make up the social structure. The lineage system unites the ancestors, the living, and the yet unborn in a uniform integrated sequence actualized at a given time in determinate corporate groups.[1] The emphasis of matrilateral kinship is on the peculiar social ties of individuals with individuals, living or dead; and every generation brings a shift in the web of matrilateral kinship bonds for the members of a particular lineage. Thus it is the polarity of these two basic concepts of kinship that brings about the striking balance between stability and continuity on the one hand, and segmentary differentiation with its tendencies towards the splitting up and dispersion of social units on the other.

We have spoken of the lineage *system* and the kinship *system* of the Tallensi. The hypothesis that the various features of any particular people's kinship institutions have a 'complex relation of interdependence' and constitute 'an organized whole' has been specially stressed by Radcliffe-Brown.[2] Our study has brought forward ample evidence in support of this hypothesis, as far as the Tallensi are concerned. What it means for the practical life of the individual is that there are no irreconcilable contradictions between the different institutions in which any one category of kinship bonds is effective, and no insoluble conflicts of loyalties arising out of incompatible rights, obligations, or sentiments, based on kinship ties.

This is partly a question of the kind of kinship ties recognized for particular social purposes and partly of the accepted order of differentiation (both as to quality and as to degree) among these ties. We have seen, for example, how the Tale notion of incest is related to the segmentation of the lineage, and how a sister's son never acquires true filial rights in his mother's brother's lineage.

[1] This has frequently been stressed by Radcliffe-Brown in (unpublished) lectures. See also his papers, 'The Study of Kinship Systems', *J.R.A.I.*, vol. lxxi, 1941, and 'Religion and Society' (Henry Myers Lecture, 1945), ibid., vol. lxxiii, 1943.

[2] Cf., for example, his previously cited paper, *J.R.A.I.*, vol. lxxi, 1941, from which the above quotations are taken.

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The pivot of the system is the dominance of the patrilineal line in Tale thought and custom. We thus get a systematic interdependence of all recognized kinship ties, with the bond between father and son as the focal point.

The interrelation of all Tale kinship institutions in a coherent system is shown in another way. Our study has shown that the lineage is the basis of a widespread and close-knit network of clanship and politico-ritual ties that embraces the whole socio-geographic region we have called Taleland[1] and even spreads over the frontiers of the region. There is nothing fortuitous about this system of social and political relationships. It is precisely organized in accordance with what we have called the field principle. In the same way we have found that the extra-clan kinship ties of a given Tale community form a close-knit web the pattern of which follows the field principle. In any defined sector of the society the network of clanship and politico-ritual ties is congruent with the web of extra-clan kinship ties. The two systems reinforce each other as unifying media in the social structure, on the level of corporate group organization, and on the level of inter-personal ties of amity, respectively. Simultaneously, they also counterbalance each other in the total flow of social life and so strengthen the general social equilibrium.

Taking Tale social structure as a whole, it can be visualized as a complex structure of different categories of social relations, correlated to different kinds of social and individual interests, rights, duties, sentiments, and values. The lineage system primarily serves jural, ritual, and political interests. The rights and duties of individuals appear as elements of corporate rights and duties. The solidarity of the unit is stressed at the expense of the individual's private interests and loyalties. The submergence of the individual's interests in those of the corporate unit is even more noticeable in the clan organization. Corporate rights, duties, and interests, however, serve not only to unite maximal lineages but also to differentiate them sharply. The cleavages between corporate units loom as large as their ties. At a higher level of the system the network of ritual collaboration and interdependence between corporate units serves as the most powerful control on the autarchic tendencies of the lineage and the resulting danger of the cleavages between lineages becoming too strong for the common good. The politico-ritual system takes care of the common good of the whole society. The interests of the individual are entirely subordinate to those of the community.

Ties of cognatic kinship, both within and across lineage boundaries, form the lowest level of social relations in the hierarchy. They differ from the social relations that exist between corporate groups in one important respect. They are ties of amity and mutual interest between individuals. Private rights and duties and personal loyalties prevail as against corporate rights, duties, and interests. Ties of cognatic kinship

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

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601 breach the barriers between individuals erected by the lineage system. They represent the recognition by the society that the direct social bonds of individual with individual are as vital for the well-being of the society as the fixed framework of corporate groupings. The intricate, ever-changing web of inter-personal kinship creates a diffused sense of mutual interest and dependence among the people of neighbouring communities. This sense of the interdependence of men as individuals in the hard struggle of ordinary living, thus canalized by kinship, not only transcends the more rigid solidarities of family, lineage, and local clan, but also counteracts the frictions and disturbances that constantly spring up in the relations of individuals with one another. Inter-personal kinship ties thus act both as a diffuse force of social cohesion in opposition to the sectional bias of the lineage structure, and as a moral sanction of conformity to custom. The concept of kinship amity as a basic premiss of the relations of kinsfolk of every degree reflects this aspect of kinship.

Consideration of the significance of kinship for the individual brings up the most difficult problem in the study of primitive kinship systems. In psychological terms kinship for the individual means a system of habits, sentiments, and affective ties gradually acquired in childhood. In sociological terms it means a system of rights and obligations, privileges, and duties of various degrees of definiteness, in relation to other people, a code of conduct also varying in precision from item to item and geared to a body of moral values and religious beliefs, and embracing all this, in a sense, a concept of the person himself as occupying a definite status and position in society.

What lies behind all this? What makes kinship an irreducible principle of Tale social organization? The economic and cultural homogeneity of the Tallensi to which we have frequently referred does not account for this quality of their kinship institutions. It is true that their society exists on one plane, so to speak—that is to say it exists solely in the living contemporaneity of their social life; for as we have shown in the first part of this study the Tallensi have no conscious historical perspective stretching beyond living memory. In such a society only those principles of social organization can remain valid which require no historical foundations or sanctions but are carried in the day-to-day life of the people. Again, the exiguous range of material goods, productive skills, means of communication, and empirical knowledge, all serve to keep the social division of labour down to a minimum and the range of social relations within correspondingly narrow limits. This, too, puts a premium on principles of social organization that can be maintained in action by direct inter-personal relationships. These factors undoubtedly form essential prerequisites for the existence of an all-embracing scheme of genealogical relationships as the articulating principle of social organization. But comparative research shows that they do not wholly account for the irreducible

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character of the norms of social organization based on the recognition of kinship, in any human society. We know from comparative studies that kinship bears a similar stress (though its scope is often more limited) in the social organization of peoples with far more highly differentiated social systems than that of the Tallensi.[1]

The usual solution to this question, explicitly stated by Malinowski, Firth, and others,[2] and implicit in the descriptive work of most social scientists who write on kinship, puts the emphasis on the facts of sex, procreation, and the rearing of offspring. There is obvious truth in this view. But like all attempts to explain one order of organic events by invoking a simpler order of events necessarily involved in the first, it borders on over-simplification. It is like trying to explain human thinking by the anatomy of the brain, or modern capitalist economy by the need for food and shelter. Such explanations, which indicate the necessary pre-conditions of phenomena, are apt to short-circuit the real work of science, which is the elucidation of the sufficient causal or functional determinants involved in the observed data of behaviour. They are particularly specious in social science. It is easy and tempting to jump from one level of organization to another in the continuum of body, mind, and society when analysis at one level seems to lead no farther. As regards primitive kinship institutions, the facts of sex, procreation, and the rearing of offspring constitute only the universal raw material of kinship systems. Our study has shown that economic techniques and religious values have as close a connexion with the Tale lineage system, for example, as the reproductive needs of the society. Indeed, comparative and historical research leaves no doubt that radical changes in the economic organization or the religious values of a society like that of the Tallensi might rapidly undermine the lineage structure; but some form of family organization will persist and take care of the

[1] Including, of course, our own social system. As is well known to students of Roman Law, the Romans had a kinship system comparable in many respects with those found amongst primitive peoples to-day (cf. Sir Henry Maine, *Ancient Law*). Similar kinship systems were found among the tribes of central and northern Europe in antiquity. The patrilineal joint family system, in fact, survived in parts of eastern Europe until the latter half of the nineteenth century (cf. Vinogradoff, op. cit., vol. i). A lineage system having many analogies to that of the Tallensi is found amongst Arab villages of to-day (cf. Hilma Granqvist, *Marriage Conditions in a Palestinian Village*, Societas Scientiarum Fennica, Helsingfors, 1931), among the Chinese (cf. Hsiao-Tung Fei, *Peasant Life in China*), and amongst the Hindu (cf. H. S. Gour, *The Hindu Code*, ch. viii).

[2] Cf. Malinowski's article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *cit. supra*, and Firth, op. cit., p. 577. Historically this view owes much to Westermarck's *History of Human Marriage*, and has been strongly reinforced in recent years by psychological theory as expressed, for example, in J. C. Flugel's book, *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Family*. It is the current view amongst most sociologists. (Cf. for a clear and succinct recent statement of it, R. MacIver, *Society*, ch. xi.

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601 reproductive needs of the society. The postulate we have cited overlooks the fact that kinship covers a greater field of social relations than the family.

The problem we have raised cannot be solved in the context of an analytical study of one society; it requires a great deal of comparative research. We can, however, justifiably suggest an hypothesis on the basis of our limited inquiry. One of the striking things about Tale kinship institutions is the socially acknowledged sanctions behind them. When we ask why the natives so seldom, on the whole, transgress the norms of conduct attached to kinship ties, we inevitably come back either to the ancestor cult or to moral axioms regarded as self-evident by the Tallensi. To study Tale kinship institutions apart from the religious and moral ideas and values of the natives would be as one-sided as to leave out the facts of sex and procreation. On the other hand, our analysis has shown that it is equally impossible to understand Tale religious beliefs and moral norms apart from the context of kinship. A very close functional interdependence exists between these two categories of social facts. The relevant connecting link, for our present problem, is the axiom, implicit in all Tale kinship institutions, that kinship relations are essentially moral relations, binding in their own right. Every social system presupposes such basic moral axioms. They are implicit in the categories of values and of behaviour which we sum up in concepts such as rights, duties, justice, amity, respect, wrong, sin. Such concepts occur in every known human society, though the kind of behaviour and the content of the values covered by them vary enormously. Modern research in psychology and sociology makes it clear that these axioms are rooted in the direct experience of the inevitability of interdependence between men in society. Utter moral isolation for the individual is not only the negation of society but the negation of humanity itself.[1] Our suggestion is that the essence of a highly elaborated kinship system like that of the Tallensi lies in its function as the primary mechanism through which the basic moral axioms of a society of the type represented by the Tallensi are translated into the concrete give and take of social life. This is perhaps more obvious if we remember that the experience of the inevitability of human interdependence is implanted in the individual in the initial situation of kinship (as Malinowski called it), the dependence of the child on its parents. The focal field of kinship is also the focal field of moral experience; and the psychological and social factors that generate it are symbolically projected in religious beliefs. The hypothesis that all kinship institutions derive from the facts of sex, procreation, and child-rearing is acceptable if the emphasis is laid not on their biological or

[1] Vide Fromm, E., *The Fear of Freedom*, London, 1941, for a recent exposition, on the basis of modern psychological and sociological findings, of this ancient thesis of moral philosophers.

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utilitarian value but on the moral values attached by society to these facts, and perpetuated through the social relationships brought into being by their conjunction.

This inference is strengthened when we consider the evidence of comparative studies. Patrilineal societies, for example, are found in many parts of the world, including our own culture area. Lineage systems similar to that of the Tallensi occur in a large number of patrilineal societies in Africa, Asia Minor, and the Far East. There is wide variation in the conventions and customs governing sex relations, procreation, and child-rearing in these societies. But there appear to be certain basic features common to all patrilineal societies in the form of the moral values attached to social relationships within the focal field of kinship. Incest taboos; the stress on sexual fidelity in marriage; the supremacy of the husband-father; filial piety counteracting the suppressed antagonism between father and son and mother and daughter—these are some of the main features common to the schemes of moral values found in all patrilineal societies.

These values embody the fundamental moral axioms of the society; and it is this that makes kinship, regarded as a mechanism for the ordering of social relationships within a given society, one of the irreducible principles of social structure in such a society.

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discriminatory responses to real situations, and linking it up with other patterns of behaviour and with norms of observance. The total pattern is not built up brick by brick, like a house, but evolves from the embryonic form.

A simple demonstration of this principle is provided by a child's learning to dance. A favourite amusement of women with infants just beginning to walk is to let them dance. The tiny tot, barely able to maintain an upright posture for ten minutes or so, is set up on its legs. A couple of women—usually the women of a homestead play with an infant thus when they have no work on hand—calling out to it, with laughter and warmth, 'Come on, dance', begin to sing and clap a dance rhythm and execute a few steps. Tale infants respond with every sign of pleasure to such stimulus and by the age of about 3 have learnt, in a sketchy and diagrammatic but specifically recognizable way, the rhythms and the main steps of the festival dances. The 6-year-old has advanced so far that he or she can sometimes join the real dancing of the adolescents. His sense of rhythm is accurate, he learns the songs quickly, and he has the pattern of the dance clearly. But his dancing is extremely crude still. It tends to be mechanical and monotonous, completely lacking the improvizations and variations, the delicate tracery of step and gesture with which the skilled adult fills out the formal pattern. Every year improves the child's style, but even the adolescent has not yet perfected his or her technique. Yet from babyhood to maturity dancing ability grows continuously.

A child's knowledge of the kinship structure evolves in the same way. The schema, rudimentary and unstable as yet, can be detected in the 3–4-year-old. He or she discriminates kinsfolk from non-kinsfolk, equating the former mainly with people living in close proximity. He knows his own father and mother precisely, but already calls his mother's co-wives 'mother'. Similarly, he knows that 'father' is his own father, but that other men—in the first instance those of the same joint family—are also 'fathers', and he knows that the other kinsfolk frequently seen are brothers, sisters, grandfather, grandmother. But he is still incapable of discriminating genealogical differences; he groups people by generation and by spatial proximity. Thus an adult brother may be described as a

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'father'. A child learns the fundamental kinship terms and has the idea of distinguishing its relatives according to generation and genealogical distance long before it can couple this knowledge accurately with differential behaviour towards kinsmen. The 6-year-old knows the correct terms and appropriate behaviour defining its relations with the members of its own paternal family and has grasped the principle of classification according to descent. But in practice he still confuses spatial proximity and relative age with kinship, beyond the limits of his own family. The 10–12 year old has mastered the schema, except for some collateral and affinal kinsmen, the terms for whom are known though he cannot describe the relationships.

Biological drives and cultural motives combine to produce variations in the rates of evolution of different schemas. I have not the experimental data to give accurate or even sample norms, but a rough indication is possible. If the 6-year-old is compared with the 12-year-old in respect to e.g. knowledge of the kinship structure, of agricultural processes, of ritual, and of sex life, the 6-year-old is least advanced in knowledge of the kinship structure and ritual, and most advanced in his or her knowledge of sex life, while knowledge of agricultural processes could fall somewhere between these two levels.

V. Fundamental Learning Processes

In the course of the preceding discussion I have given several indications of how Tale children are taught and learn. But our investigation would be incomplete without a special consideration of the three fundamental processes utilized by the child in its learning —mimesis, identification, and co-operation. These are not the only learning techniques observable among the Tallensi, but they are the most important; and they usually appear not in isolation but in association with one another. They are most intimately interwoven in play, the paramount educational exercise of Tale children.

Mimesis. Writers on primitive education have often attributed an almost mystical significance to 'imitation' as the principal method by which a child learns. The Tallensi themselves declare that children learn by 'looking and doing'; but neither 'imitation' nor the formula used by the Tallensi help us to understand the actually observable process. Tale children do not automatically copy the